

“I Know That Man”

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Published by
The Siegfried Company, Inc.
20 Vesey St., New York

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JUL -9 1918

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“I KNOW THAT MAN”

by

Harry Varley

FOREWORD

Every true lover of America has seen this man at some time or another.

Everyone has felt the tremendous influence of his presence.

YOU might have seen him as the departing soldiers passed on parade; when the flag climbed to the top of the staff and the band struck up the national hymn; when the thinned, faltering ranks of the Blue and Gray veterans made their yearly pilgrimage to their beloved dead, or when the fife and drums wiped out the years between and carried you back to other days.

But he came closest to you when the big call was sounded and you gave up the dearest treasures of life—son, brother, husband or friend. It was his spirit that gave you courage to send them to the battle! The example of his life and death that kept the proud, glad smile on your lips—and on theirs—though your heart wept a rain of tears!

THEN, if never before, you knew this man and all that he has meant and does mean to America.

H. V.

*Port Washington,
Long Island.*

"I KNOW THAT MAN"

CHAPTER I.

THE room clerk at the Hotel mechanically swung around the book, dipped the pen in the ink and handed it to the incoming guest.

The hand grasping the pen, as it showed up in sharp contrast to his own, caught the clerk's attention. It was a large hand and bony and gave the impression of having been shaped by severe manual toil. There were strength and power in the three sinews that stood out like whipcords running from the first three knuckles to the thin, wiry wrist.

Then it was the clerk looked up to find before and towering above him a bearded, heavily-lined face in which deep-set eyes burned in the hollows made by the high cheek bones and the slightly over-hanging brows.

There was a brief pause as the guest hesitated with the pen hovering over the register. Then, with a faint curl of the lip that might have been a whimsical little smile or a touch of amused scorn, he wrote slowly and deliberately,

JOHN SMITH,

leaving vacant the space for location.

Handing back the pen to the clerk, the guest stood silently while the book was swung around.

"What city, Mr. Smith;" asked the clerk.

"Is it necessary?"

"It is customary, Mr. Smith."

"Write Washington, if you please."

The arrangements being made, a boy took the guest's bag and walked ahead; John Smith gazed straight at the clerk for the briefest possible moment, then turned and followed the boy to the elevator.

For once in his long career the clerk forgot himself while on duty. Elbows on the desk, he leaned forward and watched the retreating figure as it stooped low to enter the elevator and until the door was closed upon it. Even then he remained in the same rapt pose until the insistent cough of the manager broke in upon his dreaming.

"I—er—beg your pardon, Mr. Connolly! I was thinking."

"Of what?"

The clerk pointed to the register.

"That man—John Smith—I know him. I have seen his face before, and you know, Mr. Connolly, I never forget a face, but I can't place him—and yet he might be—no, I simply can't place him."

"S'pose that's his right name?"

"I'm sure it's not."

"Think he's all right?"

"I know it. He's some big man. His name

is on the end of my tongue. I'll surely remember him."

"If you do, let me know;" and the manager turned away to look up Wilkins, the hotel detective.

The clerk was still thinking, for he tapped on the desk with the pen, and if one could have crept near to him he would have heard him mutter,

"John Smith—but it can't be. *I know that man.*"

CHAPTER II.

THE next day John Smith was sitting in the writing room, with the palms of his hands on the table, his fingers outstretched. He was in deep thought.

A bell-boy burst into the room, paused long enough to cry, "The Germans have sunk the *Lusitania*! Nearly all on board drowned!" and he was gone. Pens were dropped, white-faced men hurried from the room, leaving the solitary figure at the table. John Smith was motionless. He might have been sitting for a sculptor. . . .

Except that the slightly protruding lower lip was drawn and thin.

Then, slowly, the long fingers began to draw together until the big fists were clenched. They alone betrayed the overwhelming intensity of feeling. The skin, stretched over the knuckles, threatened to split. Something was being

crushed in these two vises of flesh, blood and bone. It was the grip of a man who seizes some mad animal by the throat and who knows that to relax that hold for an instant is to die.

For half an hour John Smith remained. Rising, he passed out into the open air, forgetting his hat.

CHAPTER III.

AMERICA, the big, the beautiful, was in the grip of an octopus. Its slimy tentacles were thrust out in every direction. They enveloped the laborer digging in the ditches and reached out and grasped those who sat in the high places. It twisted its vicious coils around the throat of the nation and choked back words that should have been spoken.

Like the real octopus, its blood was ink, and it spurted the vile, filthy fluid so that it mingled with the good, clean ink used on even the best and cleanest presses, and newspapers and books of all kinds reeked with it.

Most people surrendered unknowingly to the creature. The baleful eyes of it possessed some strange, serpent-like fascination which hypnotized them. The coils that were constantly tightening around them were so soft, so sinuous, they were scarcely felt. The suckers on the tentacles that were drawing the life-blood from their hearts, instead of making them realize the danger, were drawing out of them all

resistance and inducing a pleasant desire to sleep.

It was the sleep similar to that which overtakes a traveler lost in the Alpine snows. . . .

Or the African who eats of a certain berry. . . .

Or him who is overcome by some odorless, poisonous vapor. . . .

And from such a sleep there can be no awakening.

It was said that the creature had a firm grip on him who sat, lonely in a multitude, solitary in the crowds that thronged the White House; the calm, thin-faced man, with the care-and-study, worn look. *It was also said that this was a black lie.*

For a time it seemed that the country was lost—as if traditions were forgotten. The spirit that made Boston Harbor a gigantic tea-pot was dead. Liberty itself, like the poor cracked bell in Independence Hall, had no voice to arouse the people from their stupor. World events; great upheavals in humanity; earthquakes among nations; tottering thrones—all were insufficient to open the eyes of those who refused to see. As though a man on a sinking ship should compose himself for sleep, saying, “At any rate, *my* berth is dry!”

There were some who, with bare hands, attacked this creature that it might not destroy the fairest of lands. And the blind, unseeing victims that they were trying to save accused

them of cruelty, treachery and worse. The Colonel from Oyster Bay; the General from New York; the Governor from California and others fought hard against this Thing.

At the bottom of the sea there was also that which, fifty years ago, would have brought the weaver from his loom, the farmer from his plough, the banker from his desk and the preacher from his pulpit. As one man they would have listened to the cries of the little children—their own people; the women—who were their own sisters—and the men whose first breaths had been drawn in American air on American soil, and were, in very truth, their blood brothers.

Men would have shouted in such a terrible voice that the whole world would have quivered with their, "This shall not be!" and lives would have been given as freely as if each one were but the chaff from a single grain of wheat. Two streams—two mighty rivers—would have run from this land; one of gold, the other of blood.

But the ears of the people were stopped, their eyes blinded and perceptions dulled, enveloped in the slimy, strangling folds of the octopus. It had many names—Pro-Germanism, which was inadequate; Pacifism, which was wrong, and Socialism, which was absurd.

There was no real name for this Thing which was absorbing the soul of the youngest, strongest nation of them all.

It became necessary that this creature

should die that America could live. A man big enough and strong enough, armed with the proper weapons, was needed to slay the monster.

The name of such a man was unknown. . . .

Unless it were John Smith.

CHAPTER IV.

A BIG crowd surrounded a speaker on Boston Common. He was one of those men who claimed that the country was not in the toils of an octopus, and even if it were true, an octopus was a kind, gentle creature that we should nurse in our bosom.

He was an orator. He gripped the people by the sheer fervor of his speech and the words, gestures and pauses which are specious tricks of the professional speaker. Tangling his listeners in the labyrinths of argument; losing them for a moment in a maze of statistics, only to appear later as a guide to lead them back to the road; appealing to their many natures by devious sophistries, he held them, silent; tense; hanging on every word.

Suddenly there was a slight movement in the back of the crowd. A man, head and shoulders above the rest, was seen to be approaching the speaker. It did not seem as if he were pushing his way through the packed mass; nor did the people open a passage for him, but slowly, persistently, he drew nearer the improvised platform.

When he was within ten feet of the speaker he stopped. The crowd sensed that something was happening. As though thought and speech were failing him, the speaker's sentences began to falter. He stammered, looked away, but as if drawn by some invisible force, his eyes ever turned back to the tall figure which stood apparently intent upon the discourse.

The words trailed off into a mumble. The speaker turned and whispered to a man near him on the platform. This man shook his head vigorously and urged the lecturer to proceed. Murmurs, inquiring, half-threatening, were heard on the edge of the crowd. Then a man abruptly left the platform and approached the tall listener.

"I've been requested to ask you to go away—please," he said, earnestly.

A policeman elbowed his way to the couple.

"What's the trouble here now?"

The man from the platform spoke:

"This man is annoying the lecturer and I asked him to go away."

The policeman glanced from the speaker to the other silent figure. Then his hand went to the salute as if he recognized a superior officer.

"Beggin' your pardon, sir. I didn't know it was you, Mr.—Mr.——"

The policeman laid his hand on the shoulder of the man from the platform and whispered:

"He's all right. You'd better tell your pals to watch themselves." Then, touching his cap,

the policeman walked around the inside of the semi-circle made by the people standing around the platform and disappeared. Another speaker had commenced, but his words fell on inattentive ears. Some on the outer edge began to move away, when a burly, bulldog-faced man emerged from behind the platform, carrying a short, heavy stick.

He came directly to John Smith. The crowd drew closer. The speaker stopped.

"Now then, you, clear out of this!" and the newcomer thrust his face up until it was on a level with the bearded chin. It was the meeting of man and brute. John Smith looked down and his head motioned an almost imperceptible negative. The stick was raised threateningly.

"I won't arsk yer agen. Get out o' here an' don't break up the meetin'!"

John Smith's eyes lit up with a dangerous fire, but his voice was gentle as he replied:

"I shall stay until you go and until they go. That is why I came." And he motioned toward the men on the platform.

What happened then was so unexpected that it was over before the people could realize it. The stick went up to strike, but the blow, instead of falling on the face of John Smith, was caught on the black wrist of a negro standing near. There was a sharp crack as the bone broke. Again the stick went up, and again the negro took the blow—this time full on the temple. He dropped. The mob surged forward,

breaking into two lines at the spot where John Smith was holding the limp negro in his arm. The man with the stick was caught; his collar was torn from his neck, while three crimson scratches were made down his face by someone who ineffectually tried to hold him. He was carried forward, knocked down and trampled under foot. Reaching the platform, they proceeded to demolish it with a blind fury. The occupants fled, beaten and bruised. It seemed as if a spell holding the people had been broken—that they had at last realized that this platform and the men speaking from it were horrible, blasphemous, and that treachery and vile things had been thought and even spoken in the shadow of the golden dome of the State House and the Stars and Stripes that flew over all.

It was only when the police came in force that order was restored. An ambulance had been called. As they put the negro on the stretcher he recovered consciousness for a moment and looked up. John Smith bent over him.

“Thank you, my friend, I am indebted to you for my life.”

The negro shook his head, and there was a gladness out-showing the pain and agony which had brought the perspiration to his forehead.

Slowly he lifted his hand to wipe away the red that trickled down from an ugly gash into his blinded eye.

“Yo’ doan’ owe me nothin’, boss. Ah was on’y payin’ yo’ back—payin’ yo’ back——” and

his eyes closed again as the white-uniformed men lifted him into the ambulance and drove away.

CHAPTER V.

ONE afternoon in the summer of 1915 a man walked through a certain Square in Washington. People turned to look at him as he passed, but he heeded none. He came to the flagstaff. The cord, moved by a faint breeze, was tapping against the staff, and the flag flapped lazily to and fro.

The man raised his hat.

Still keeping to the path, he reached the intersection where, before a bronze statue, a group of people stood in respectful attention. The men were bare-headed. A large butterfly, black and gold, flitted above the crowd.

A boy of twelve or fourteen was reading the inscription on the base of the monument. His voice was clear, and with that conscious pride of childhood showing its ability, he enunciated every word in classroom fashion.

The man listened attentively, but it was noticeable that of all the men, he alone had not removed his hat. As he listened, there came again to his lips that ghost of a smile, the meaning of which was so hard to define. The boy finished. A bee passed over them droning his way like a distant airplane.

The statue was Abraham Lincoln.

The man was John Smith.

CHAPTER VI.

THERE was another day when the man named Smith went to the ticket office of a railroad station.

"I want a ticket for Oyster Bay, if you please."

"Single, sir?" asked the clerk.

"No! Give me a return ticket, please."

CHAPTER VII.

THE Colonel was hacking away at a tree stump, sleeves rolled up, muscles bared and perspiration gleaming on every visible part of him. The stump seemed to be something animate that it was necessary to kill. It might have represented all the evil in the world—some wicked dragon which he alone could exterminate by the power of his arms and the aid of his trusty axe.

Presently he became aware of someone standing there beside him; someone standing over him, in fact, which could have been due to the extreme tallness of the stranger or to the slightly higher ground on which he stood. The Colonel dropped the axe, wiped his hands on a handkerchief, and as he did so, said in his pleasantest voice:

"Excuse me! Didn't see you standing there. Glad to see you, I'm sure." He thrust out his

strong hand, which was enveloped in a stronger, and there was the big grip of two such men when they meet, then—

“Let me see, you are——”

The quiet voice broke in :

“Smith—John Smith.”

“Delighted, Mr. Smith. Knew your face the minute I saw you, but couldn’t remember the name. I meet so many people, y’ know. What can I do for you?”

“For me—nothing. For yourself and for the country—everything, if you will.”

“I’m afraid I don’t understand. Whom do you represent?”

The intruder passed the back of his hand across his forehead with a weary gesture.

“I represent the people who are disappointed in you and those who still retain their belief in you in spite of everything.”

There was nothing but a quiet, gentle force in the lowly spoken words, but the cheeks of the Colonel flushed. He would have spoken, but the hand of John Smith was raised in such a way as to forbid interruption.

“I knew if I came to see you, you would write and speak to the tens of thousands of our young men who love you, the thousands who feel that they should despise you and to the few who are indifferent. I knew that, regardless of the personal glory to be obtained and the inevitable condemnation you would receive, you would point out to them the way that would lead them

in the right direction—that you would call them, not for the love of you or adventure, but for the love of America and democracy. You could inspire them with that high courage, that noble sense of duty which would make them lay down their lives on the altar of Freedom with the same pure abandon that, out of all the suffering and sorrow of the Civil War, made the States arise United—at last a unified nation among the nations of the world.

“I thought that you would sweep the country as by fire—that at the sound of your voice, the empty ranks would be filled, the ships would be manned, and in the thunder of the tramp of thousands of feet, the cries of those who speak against you would be stilled forever.”

A complete change had swept over the Colonel's face.

“You mean there are people who don't believe in me—who think I am not sincerely doing everything I can for the good of the country?”

“There are some—many.”

“And all I have said, written and done to arouse the people has not convinced them otherwise?”

“In spite of those things and because of them, they still need proof.”

“The jackasses! The doubting Thomases! What have I to gain by—Why——” He was interrupted.

“And, like the other Thomas, they must put

their fingers in the very wounds of you before they will believe in you. They remember what your enemies have said of Chicago. . . . But I must go. May I take with me, where I go, the assurance that you will continue to give yourself for America?"

Their hands clasped.

John Smith turned away. The Colonel stood with his one hand on the handle of the axe. Before his eyes was Rubicon. He watched the rapidly disappearing figure.

"I know that man—well—but for my life I can't say who he is. I haven't been doing enough. He was right."

John Smith had vanished in the trees. The Colonel lifted the axe as if to resume his exercise, but instead of making the sweeping arch, the curve broke at the top, the axe dropped to the ground and he stood there thinking.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRISTMAS DAY! John Smith walked up Riverside Drive to Grant's Tomb.

The church bells were ringing out the old message of peace and goodwill. Ironical it seemed while the other side of the world ran red with the blood of battle.

John Smith stopped at Grant's Tomb. With fingers locked behind his back, he looked up at the words,

LET US HAVE PEACE

His face was set like a bronze mask. His head moved slowly from side to side.

"Not yet—nor for a long time," he said.

CHAPTER IX.

A GIGANTIC struggle had commenced in the United States—a new Civil War—in which the combatants fought in such a way that only thinking people were able to estimate the enormous forces at war by the scraps of evidence which came in from all sides.

That a peril, greater than that which made '61 necessary, was existing in the country was unknown to the majority, and even clear-seeing, patriotic men who ranged themselves against the enemy scarcely understood the vitalness of the Thing they fought.

In every corner of the vast country the two great conflicting influences were felt—the one seductive, evil, appealing to all that was soft and ease-loving in men; the other fighting desperately against this and bringing to bear upon it all the glorious bitterness of the travail of 1776; the long list of the dead who died for their country; the splendor of the men who upheld the hands of the President in 1861, and the wonderful promise of this nation in the making—a promise that threatened to be unfulfilled owing to the machinations of this new, insidious Thing that changed men's blood to water.

And everywhere, where the battle was fiercest, where the people were ready to succumb, was found a tall, gaunt, generally silent man, who, by his very presence, woke up the people from their deadly apathy.

Who he was no one knew, yet it was remarkable that every man, woman and child who looked on his face was haunted by the thought that this man was not unknown to them. Somewhere they had seen him before, but none knew where. It was John Smith. He would be heard of in Eastport, Maine, at a noontime meeting in a canning factory, and in a few days he would be reported at Palm Beach. He was seen in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Kansas City, Denver and Cleveland. Many times his life was in great danger. In Chicago the Mayor gave strict instructions to keep John Smith out of the city, but in some way he evaded the police, and twice broke up the so-called pacifist meetings.

He had an interview with the Commoner in Nebraska. What passed between them was never published, but thereafter the silver-tongued orator was strangely silent in public, and continually seemed to be brooding. Afterwards he offered himself to the Government as a soldier and then he was happier.

John Smith saw the automobile manufacturer of Detroit. He visited him at his home one night, and but a short time elapsed when everything the manufacturer possessed was placed at the disposal of the Government.

Several times he was reported in two places on the same day, though hundreds of miles separated them. For instance, when he broke up the meeting on Boston Common, a Philadelphia newspaper contained an item which stated that a man named John Smith had spoken to a number of sailors who had come to visit Independence Hall.

Every important editorial writer in the country was visited at least once by John Smith during the year 1916. Slowly but surely a change was made manifest in the land. The few broken murmurs increased in volume, the sound was caught up and repeated until it spread, and in every city the clarion call began to ring out—the tocsin—the call for Americans to justify themselves before their fathers, to throw off the Thing that threatened.

Nowhere was the name of John Smith prominent, but the words he put into the mouths of the people were spoken; the thoughts he planted in their brains germinated and grew into actions.

Through the winter of 1916-17 events moved rapidly to a climax. The mysterious power produced by this one man had reached such a tremendous size that the nation trembled with its vibrations.

In the center of things, calm, unruffled, the President sat waiting—waiting. Few men in the history of the world have met such a colossal problem in such an impassive way. It needed



but the lifting of a finger to start an avalanche that might sweep him and the country into oblivion—or lift them both to the stars.

As he sat there in his office in the White House, while the late March winds were whistling through the trees, he gave orders on a certain day that for several hours he must be undisturbed—that he should be left entirely alone to write what was in his mind. Who disobeyed him, if anyone did, will never be known, but torn with the stress of emotions, he heard nothing until he glanced up and saw, standing in the doorway as in a frame, a man whose head almost reached the top of the opening.

CHAPTER X.

AS John Smith advanced, the President rose from his chair. There was no surprise in his eyes. It was strange and significant that this man who knew no superiors among a hundred million, should arise, stand behind his chair and offer it to the visitor.

The old smile played fitfully on the visitor's lips as he put one hand on each shoulder of the President, looked down at him and in the kindest of voices said:

"No! I could not take that. You are the only one for that place—now." But the President remained standing until John Smith placed a chair on the opposite side of the desk, had seated himself, and spoken again:

"Did you expect me?"

"Yes! I have felt for some time that you were very close to me."

"Is there anything I can do—any part of the burden that you can put upon my shoulders?"

"No! I must carry it alone—as you did. That is one of the penalties we pay for being chosen of the people." And the President fingered the papers lying on the desk. Then he began, speaking quickly and in a low voice:

"One of the penalties! Isolation that is absolute. The farmer in the field can utter his inmost thoughts and only the birds will hear and forget, but when we speak, every wind carries the sound. Every second it travels tends to distort it. Words are misunderstood. Worse than that, they are misconstrued deliberately. But through it all we must remain silent. The laborer voices his opinions how and where he will, but we must have none except that opinion which is the combined thought of the majority as near as we can perceive it. When a man is chosen to lead a people, he is no longer a man in the performance of his duty to that people. His personality, his individuality must be utterly lost and he must become as a judge, free from biasing influence; beyond and above it. It is wonderful—but sometimes one grows very tired."

John Smith nodded a grave assent. The President continued:

“For more than two years I have seen a vision which I could not reveal. Every thought, every word and every action have been measured by the possibility—the absolute assurance that this vision would become an actuality. I saw America being led by uncontrolled, uncontrollable conditions into a war which would be more costly in lives than any she has yet known. There was a time when it would have been wrong for us to consider it. There was a time when no justification could be found for stepping in. An alliance with Russia under the heel of a despot was impossible. Even England, at the beginning, was fighting for something which did not concern us, which forbade our taking a stand with her. But now it seems to me that there can be no other way out. I hesitate—not because I do not believe we are right, but because of the awful responsibility that it should be I, no more than an ordinary man except as the people have chosen to make me, who should, by this one decision, plunge the country into a conflict, which, if we were not in the right, would be abhorrent to every man who can think. Could anything be more terrible than to have to make such a decision?”

He waited for the answer.

“Yes! There is one thing worse even than that. You might have been called upon to decide when it meant that you would divide the country against itself; when that decision would turn children against parents and brothers against

brothers; when every drop of blood shed was your own people's; when every square mile of land desolated and devastated was your own loved land. Yes! there have been men who have had to make decisions more fraught with terrible consequences than even yours. Each of us has his own particular Calvary where his desires, ideals and aspirations are crucified. Each of us must immolate himself upon the altar that men call Duty."

There was silence for a few moments. The President ended it.

"You are right. I should have remembered. For me there is but one thing to do. I see it now—clearly. America—the spirit of America—must be made articulate. The time has come for us to choose and to speak, act and think together. There is only one thing I fear—that words will be inadequate to express properly the profound depths of the message; to reveal the American people, not only to the nations in whose ranks we must fight, but to the peoples we must fight against. The challenge—or I should say our acceptance of the challenge—must be in such a language that none can misunderstand or evade its simple truth. Shall I—can I make myself and my words worthy of the people I represent?"

John Smith rose abruptly. He stretched out his hand and seized that of the President, who also had risen from his chair. The silence that followed was pregnant with unspoken thoughts

that both men understood as if they had been said. In it was the complete revelation of one life that had been lived in service for the country they both loved; that had only ended in the supreme sacrifice. To him who saw it laid bare by that tremendous silence, it was the one thing needful. Not another word was spoken. There was just the tightening of the grip, and John Smith was gone.

The President stood like a man who has seen the great light. His eyes were fixed on the little flag which hung in the room. In them was the glory that one pictures in the eyes of martyrs when the flames lick their limbs and are breathed into their lungs.

The waiting was ended.

He pressed a button on the desk.

CHAPTER XI.

AT a Cabinet meeting held March 31st, 1917, the President definitely came out for war. In different parts of the country, patriotic meetings were held on this day. More than ten thousand citizens of Pittsburgh met in Exposition Music Hall to pledge themselves to stand by the President. A greater number met in Independence Square, Philadelphia.

Something fatal had struck the octopus. It had received its death blow, and everywhere the coils had relaxed or had been cut away. In some

few places its work was still to be seen. For instance, there was a private meeting in Washington at which were Senators from North Dakota, Nebraska, Missouri, Wisconsin, Oregon, Mississippi and other States. They were planning to betray the President and the country, but with motives that, to them, were pure.

John Smith was there also. He had come to save these men from themselves, but when the Senator from Missouri denounced the war resolution in firm, irrevocable words, John Smith was seen to falter. His hand went to the back of his head and his face whitened. He would have fallen but a kindly person assisted him.

"What is the matter? Are you ill?" asked the one who helped him.

"No! It is only an old wound I received that rankles sometimes. Something that was said recalled it."

But this incident was of no grievous importance. With a few similar exceptions that always exist, the country had at last risen to meet its destiny; to do that which would write its name forever, without blot or stain, on the pages of Time.

CHAPTER XII.

IT was the hour before dusk. John Smith stood in the park with his hands clasped behind his back, his eyes fixed on the gravel path at his feet. In his pose was the contemplation of a

man whose work is done—a man whose work was almost a world-work. So might Goethals have stood on the heights at Culebra and looked down as the first ship edged and elbowed her way through the canal.

Down the path came a boy; a schoolboy whose age at the most was nine. As he neared the tall, silent figure, a narrow shaft of light—it might have been the last ray from the setting sun through the trees—fell on the bearded face and outlined the gaunt profile with a penciled edge of light.

The boy stopped—transfixed. It was more than surprise that held him. Here was recognition, partial but definite.

John Smith looked up from the gravel to the big, wonder-struck eyes. He must have read the young mind and the “I think I know you” which was evident in the boy’s manner, for the grave voice spoke as if prompting.

“So you think you know me?”

There was the natural hesitation and timidity in the reply.

“I know you—I think.”

A gun was fired in the distance. As the report came to them—a dull, muffled thud—the flag on the staff on the top of the hill began to crawl down. The boy watched the waving patch, he caught the gleam from the scarlet bars, and suddenly, with a glad cry in which was everything of reverence and joy, he seized the big, knotted right hand.

"I know you now! I know you! You are——"

The upraised finger of the left hand cut off the sentence, while the fingers of the right hand closed over the frail, slim hand of the child.

"Yes, I am that man."

The light died out from the face, leaving only the soft radiance of an afterglow. Together the two stood for a few moments. Then, rousing himself, John Smith put one hand on the boy's head. He spoke, as much to himself as to the child.

"That is all that really matters, that you should know of me—should know me. Today is nothing, and the men of Today compared with Tomorrow. Tomorrow it will be you—the children—and they must know."

He looked down.

"Where are you going?"

"I am going home to tell my mother and father, and tomorrow I will tell the teacher and all of them that I saw you and you spoke to me."

"They won't believe you, boy. . . . But I must be going. I, too, am going home."

One more tightening of the hands and these two parted, one to the west, one to the east. And when the boy reached the crest of the hill, he turned and waved his hand before he dropped down below the skyline.

John Smith had also stopped. He answered the sign, then he turned and slowly walked away into the gathering gloom.

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